

The Sun

FOR 1888.

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UNITED DEMOCRACY.

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THE SUN,

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MONDAY, MARCH 19, 1888.

A New Device for Favoring the Canadian Railroads.

In their anxiety to prevent Congress from amending the Inter-State Commerce act so as to put an end to the transit trade between the Eastern and Western States through the Dominion of Canada, the friends of the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific now propose that the Inter-State Commerce Commission be allowed to license the Canadian roads as common carriers, so long as they observe all the requirements of the act in Canada as well as in the United States, with authority on the part of the Commissioners to revoke or suspend the license for any violations of the Inter-State Commerce law.

This is a shallow device which Congress should never adopt, and which if allowed would prove to be simply another cover for Canadian trickery. The Commissioners could have no adequate means for detecting violations of the law in Canada, and the suggestion, resting only on Canadian honesty and good faith, is absurd. The Commissioners have all and more than they can properly do now to look after the shortcomings and secret practices of our own railroads, and should not be charged with the jurisdiction of the United States, and least of all in a country where everybody is interested in despoiling the Yankees.

When it is remembered that the tax payers of Canada have to supply the principal and pay the interest on the amounts advanced to the Canadian railroads by the Government of the Dominion, it will be seen that these tax payers are profoundly concerned in continuing the transit trade, and increasing it by all means in their control, whether fair or foul.

The fact is, the managers of the Canadian roads are badly frightened, and their attorneys and agents are unusually active everywhere in the United States, and especially at Washington, in their efforts to maintain the position which they have secured as carriers of our commerce, in violation of the rights of our railroads, and of the time-honored principles which underlie the protection of our coasting trade.

Their only ally are the free trade Administration Democrats and the Granger Republicans, whom all patriotic Americans should vigilantly watch during the present session of Congress.

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To put the matter plainly, Mr. PHELPS must feel very much like a fool to find himself surrounded and abandoned, along with the claims and arguments and propositions and counter-propositions and demands and threats and, for nearly three years, his tongue and pen have been carrying to the British Foreign Office. He has studied the American case, elaborated it, pleaded it, made himself, to a great extent, responsible for it, only to discover, when he came to read Mr. J. O. CHAMBERLAIN'S report to the Most Hon. the MARQUIS of SALISBURY, K. G., that the Administration had surrendered behind his back, and surrendered without a struggle.

It is no more than justice to Minister PHELPS to say that whoever may be responsible for the incomprehensible abandonment of a position strong in law and right, it was not he. There is no evidence that Mr. PHELPS was not the most surprised diplomat on either continent when he read the text of the CHAMBERLAIN-BAYARD treaty. It is perfectly conceivable that he should now want to resign.

Mr. PHELPS'S friends will learn with pleasure that if he should resign the thankless and unfruitful pursuit of diplomacy, a career in letters is before him. His distinguished predecessor, the Hon. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, Minister PHELPS is a poet and a humorist. One or two of the earlier productions of his Muse have been recovered from the files of the obscure country newspapers which had the honor of first printing them. Mr. PHELPS'S masterpiece is unquestionably the fish poem on Essex Junction, which we publish in another column. For the full text of this vigorous if somewhat profane canonized we are indebted to a trustworthy correspondent in the region where the poet PHELPS first uncoiled himself.

There is fame for Mr. PHELPS in that department of literature which has been so successfully cultivated by his predecessor, Mr. LOWELL, and by the Hon. EUGENE FIELD of Chicago.

Prince Joseph and Murat.

An entertaining and a spirited contest is now in progress between the Hon. JOSEPH MEDILL of Chicago and the Hon. MURAT MURPHY of Cincinnati. Both these Republican chieftains are expert throwers of the assega of controversy, and each seems now resolved to shed the red blood of the other. Mr. MEDILL thunders defiance through his trumpet, and Mr. HALSTED answers the echoes with that war horn whose slightest toot has often shaken the Solid South. The Chicago champion has a larger capital of years than his antagonist, but "old age never cools the DOUGLASS blood."

That there is still plenty of fire, of Greek fire, in fact, in the veins of the venerable editor of the Chicago Tribune is evident from this extract from his issue of last Thursday:

"Poor old HALSTED! It is amusing to observe that blunder of content attempting to lecture national men upon the duty of Republicans and Republican newspapers. From the time HARRISON began to utter his Lincolnian and Tildenian strains there never has been a moment when it was not an honor to be the subject of his wrath. As for regarding calmly with HALSTED one might as well regard calmly with a mad bull. What he really needs is a ring in his nose and a stout rope attached to it and a seasoned hickory stick at the end of the rope—the said stick to be well driven into the frozen ground in the middle of Uncle Sam's big pasture."

Mr. HALSTED'S 110-ton guns will reply to this broadside in a way to shake the Chicago Board of Trade and furline over Cook county. And so the HALSTED-MEDILL war will grow ever fiercer.

Why and wherefore, admirers of both these Western warriors will ask, does battle flame between them? What misunderstanding mingles the power of their friendship? What, to use the honey but sympathetic inquiry dear to contemporary speech, is chewing them? Can there be such wrath to celestial mingles?

This is the cause: Mr. MEDILL is a tariff smasher, while Mr. HALSTED is a tariff saver. Mr. HALSTED is now boasting with his habitual energy the boom of JOHN SHERMAN, and wailing his wrath in that chilly Mansfield air. Mr. MEDILL now, for some twelve years past, and evermore is, has been, and is to be, as warm an enemy as JOHN SHERMAN has, which is saying a good deal. Collision between these two heavy locomotives running in different directions on the same Republican track was inevitable. The crash was terrible, and it is impossible to see how full repairs can be made. Each was under a terrific head of steam, and it is escaping, and somebody is likely to get scalded.

But, discharging the force of metaphors and comparisons which it was necessary to employ in order to give the public an adequate description of the controversy, let us consider the important political consequences which may result therefrom. Mr. MEDILL has been bounding Judge GRISHAM. Therefore Mr. HALSTED has essayed to prove that Judge GRISHAM will not do it. It may be taken for granted that no candidate known to be liked by Mr. HALSTED will escape pulver